

# FABIAN QUARTERLY

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# EDITORIAL

Day to day crises over shortages of consumer goods now seem to be the rule of the day. They are largely inevitable, given the world wheat famine, our lack of dollars, the obligation to build up exports before home consumption, the refusal of the Government to be stampeded into over-rapid demobilisation and the need to restart from scratch several plans for reconstruction (e.g., housing). To the extent that they are inevitable, it is right that all of us—the Government, its supporters, and the general public alike—should face up to realities resolutely, constructively and without the many signs of petty irritation which are so prevalent. In so far as Britain's journey back to days of plenty can be shortened—or the voyage made more palatable by clear-cut, simple explanations of delays—the Government may properly be subjected to criticism from “press, parliament and people”.

But although there has been a good deal of fair criticism of Government policy and its execution, it has become hopelessly confused in the public eye with opportunist “alarm and despondency” campaigns by irresponsible elements of the daily press. The catastrophe of the rice and wheat famines—threatening millions abroad with starvation as well as a reversion to war rations in Britain—has provided political capital for those whose aim it is to discredit the Government by suggesting that it is pre-occupied with doctrinaire and unrealistic policies. Most sections of the public have normally been in no position to observe the unfolding of the Government's programme, compare the deeds of Labour Ministers with the promises made in *Let Us Face the Future*, and judge for itself, on the basis of facts, whether or not the Government is well-intentioned and fit to govern. All the more encouraging, therefore, are the by-election results at Cathcart and South Ayrshire, which in the teeth of the food crisis have confirmed, if not extended, the electors' faith in the Labour Party.

There is a stark need for education within the Labour movement, both continually and locally, on the policy and achievements of the Government; and as a basis for education the facts need getting together. The main article in this issue, the first of a quarterly series, makes some attempts to analyse the significant trends of policy from statements made in the House of Commons and elsewhere. It is followed by a useful list of Bills (and their progress during this Session) and the principal White Papers.



# THE FIRST FIVE MONTHS

What Labour Has Achieved

by Charles Smith, M.P.

The Labour Government took over a country highly organised for war, devoting a greater proportion of its resources to the prosecution of the war than any other belligerent. It was not until almost the end of its first parliamentary term, when the *Statistical Material presented during the Washington Negotiations* was published as a White Paper, that it was made clear how greatly the method of organisation for war and the scale of losses sustained have imposed handicaps on the Government. Briefly the material showed that a quarter of the wealth of the country had been destroyed or expended as a result of the war. In the first five months of power—from the end of July until the end of December—the Government has made a substantial start with the reconversion of the national economy to a peace time basis and with long term plans for reconstruction based on public control of finance and on public ownership in the basic industries.

A start upon the reconstruction of the country under the handicap of such war losses has naturally provided some openings for the Opposition. In fact it is clear to even the newest parliamentary hand on the Government side that the Opposition have missed many opportunities of scoring debating points off the Government—less from goodwill than from divided counsels and demoralisation. The effort, in the debate on the motion of censure, to make up for lost time by an all-out attack fell as flat as did Churchill's reckless speech a week earlier.

The Government has made clear its long term plans for nationalisation by a reaffirmation of its election manifesto. The announcement made by Herbert Morrison<sup>1</sup> covered national ownership of the industries of fuel and power—coal mining, gas and electricity supply ; essential transport services—including the railways, long distance road haulage, canals and dock and harbour undertakings ; civil aviation and telecommunications. Road passenger transport may be brought under public ownership ; certainly the undertakings of municipalities and companies will be co-ordinated by the use of machinery yet to be determined ; while the decision of the nationalisation of the iron and steel industry will be taken after the industry itself has presented a report which was called for by the Coalition Government on the improvements necessary to ensure efficient operations.

No less important was the announcement of the Government's long term policy for agriculture.<sup>2</sup> The foundation of this will be " a system of assured markets and guaranteed prices for the principal agricultural products ". In addition the Government will exercise control to ensure efficient farming ; and any landlord or farmer who fails to farm efficiently will be subject to a period of supervision and compulsory direction. This side of the policy will be implemented through bodies similar to the War Agricultural Executive Committees which will act as the local agents of the Ministry. The various sections of the agricultural industry are to have a voice in the selection of the members of these committees.

<sup>1</sup> In the House of Commons, 19 Nov., '45.

<sup>2</sup> In the House of Commons, 15 Nov., '45.

## FINANCE

Of the measures of nationalisation one was substantially advanced during the first term—the bill to bring the Bank of England under public ownership. This first measure of fundamental financial reform, declared the Chancellor in introducing it, “brings the law into relation with the facts” and ensures that in the event of any difference of view between the Treasury and the Bank the view of the former shall prevail. The most controversial provision of the Bill is that which enables the Bank of England, under national control, to issue directions to the joint stock banks as occasion may require, to ensure “that the operations of the other banks are harmonised with industrial needs”.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in introducing the Bill, explained that it was an essential preliminary to the Government's policy of planning the nation's economy for maximum production; and in his supplementary Budget he gave further form to the financial policy of the Government. The Budget provided for some measures of relief to income tax payers by an increase in personal allowances and by a reduction of the standard rate of income tax from 10/- to 9/- in the pound during the financial year beginning April, 1946. The Budget also provided for an immediate removal of purchase tax from certain items of household equipment; as well as for a reduction in the rate of E P T and the repayment of the 20% refund (as from the 1st January, 1946). But the Chancellor had a warning to give:

The Finance Bill will contain provisions which will govern the payment to ensure that the money is not misused. It must be ploughed back onto the business and not scattered to the winds of heaven. These refunds will provide a net sum of about £250,000,000 which should be spent over the next few years in re-equipping British industry and in installing new machines for old—in many industries a necessary and long overdue process.

The central discussion of the term however was that on the American loan and the agreements associated with it. It was in this discussion that the state to which British industry and economy had been reduced as a result of the war was most clearly depicted. As a price of the loan Britain agreed to take two steps. The first was to sign the Bretton Woods agreement—and so become a foundation member of the International Monetary Fund. The second was to take, jointly with the United States, the initiative in the calling of an international economic conference to launch an international Trade organisation.<sup>1</sup>

## TOOLS FOR THE JOB

The Government's first reconstruction task has been to arm itself with adequate powers. For this purpose it enacted the *Supplies and Services (Transitional Powers)* Bill. The declared purpose of this bill was to vest in Ministers wide powers to make regulations for the purposes of reconstruction. In moving it the Home Secretary was able to point incidentally to the fact that of the 687 regulations in force on V E day 227 had been dispensed with by the end of September. Under the Bill the Government gains, in particular, powers to continue so long as may be necessary the rationing of food, clothing, footwear, furniture and fuel; to regulate building so that non-essential work may be restricted and the price of building materials controlled; to apply regulations to agriculture; and to take such financial steps as price control to rehabilitate industry and agriculture and to relieve suffering. In addition the Government introduced the *Emergency Laws (Transitional Provisions)* Bill of which the main purpose was to keep alive certain Defence Regulations which would

<sup>1</sup> It is obviously impossible within the limits of this article to deal adequately with the American loan controversy. The subject was exhaustively debated in the House of Commons, 13 and 14 December, 1945.



otherwise have lapsed early in 1946 as a result of the decision of the government not to continue in force the Wartime Emergency Powers Acts.

As a guide to the Government in dealing with those industries which are not scheduled for nationalisation, the President of the Board of Trade has devised the expedient of working parties. These have already been set up for the cotton, furniture, pottery, hosiery and boot and shoe industries; they consist in each case of employers, Trade Union and independent members in equal numbers under a chairman appointed by the Board of Trade. The terms of reference in each case are as follows :

'To examine and inquire into the various schemes and suggestions put forward for improvements of organisation, production and distribution methods and processes in the industry, and to report as to the steps which should be taken in the national interest to strengthen the industry and render it more stable and more capable of meeting competition in the home and foreign markets.'

Sir Stafford Cripps has announced that he expects to get the reports (which will be made public) early in 1946; and he has also indicated that the same method will be used to enquire into the efficiency of other industries for the guidance of the government.

At the root of the immediate problems of reconversion lie the related questions of manpower and wages. By the end of 1945 the Government's programme of release from the Forces was well up to schedule. In spite of bad weather in December, which delayed some transport from overseas, the total of men and women released from the services was 1,511,800—a few thousands in excess of the target figure for that date.

At the same time there exist severe labour difficulties in many essential occupations—coal mining, nursing, foundry work, the manufacture of building materials among them—and there is a prospect of a very grave crisis in agricultural manpower when the present prisoner-of-war labour is no longer available. Various steps are being taken in each occupation concerned to make conditions and prospects sufficiently attractive to secure an adequate number of workers.

## HOUSING

The outlines of the Government's housing programme were made clear in a combative speech by Aneurin Bevan in October. He made it clear that the Ministry of Health (with the Secretary of State for Scotland) is to lay down the Housing programme, housing design and housing policy while the Ministries of Works and Supply provide the necessary equipment and materials. Priority is to be given to the housing needs of the working class, and so to the building of houses to let rather than for sale. For that purpose local authorities are to be the main instruments for the housing programme; but they are allowed to license private building for sale up to a limit of £1,200 in the provinces and £1,300 in London. The Minister also promised legislation to speed up the acquisition of land by local authorities; and appealed for a sharing of homes as a means of dealing with the urgent immediate shortage of accommodation.

The principal piece of legislation in the field of housing was the *Building Materials and Housing Bill*. Its purpose was, in Bevan's words, to enable "His Majesty's Government to go into business both in the manufacture and distribution of building materials and components in a big way". It is intended to finance the operations of the Ministry of Works in ensuring adequate supplies of materials and components (including prefabricated houses) and in assisting local authorities in preparing housing sites and erecting houses. The Government will start off with a working capital of £100,000,000 for these purposes. This same bill also provided for an increase of capital for the temporary housing

scheme from £150 millions to £200 millions. This temporary scheme—a legacy from the Coalition Government and the carefree Duncan Sandys—is proving to be much more costly than the original estimates and it is clear that the intention of the new Government is now limited solely to the provision of the temporary houses which have already been promised to local authorities.

Now that the main lines of policy have been laid down so far as the housing problem is concerned the problems which have to be solved are those of securing speed in the provision of materials and trained labour. The production of some building materials gave rise to real difficulties; and war damage repair and the temporary housing programme gave rise during the autumn to abnormally heavy demands for slates, asbestos, cement, plasterboard and other materials. The supply of bricks has also presented difficulty but shortly after the end of the year it was possible to say that out of the 1,362 brickworks in the country, 458 (representing when going at full blast about two thirds of the productive capacity of the country) were operating. In the supply of building materials the fundamental problem has been manpower.<sup>1</sup> In no field more than in housing has the government been handicapped by the inadequate preparations made by the Coalition Government.

Last of the major measures during the first parliamentary term is the *National Insurance (Industrial Injuries) Bill*. This is an instalment of the comprehensive social security scheme. It places protection against necessity arising from industrial injury on the basis of insurance against risk and not on the basis of ability to make good a claim for compensation. The Bill underwent two important changes in committee as a result of the activities of back bench Labour members—the standard flat rate of 45/- for benefit was substituted for the proposed 40/- and the old grievance of the 'waiting period' was abolished.

## CONCLUSION

Such a brief account does little justice to a crowded and historic parliamentary term. A measure providing for a comprehensive reorganisation of the Police forces; a bill taking under the control of the Ministry of Transport some 3,685 miles of roadways; a small but useful bill providing grants and loans for inshore fishermen; an announcement of an important change of policy affecting direct grant schools—these, together with many minor pieces of legislation and announcements of policy, were included in the period between the Government's accession to power and the end of 1945. Legislation at such a rate—and the pace appears in the future to be likely to accelerate—produces new problems of House of Commons procedure and conditions. Two Select Committees of the House have been appointed during the Government's tenure of office. One is to deal with procedure and the way in which the passage of legislation can be made as speedy as is consistent with full discussion and examination. The other is to examine the expenses, remuneration and conditions of work of Members themselves, to enable them to bear the heavy burden which the present pace of parliamentary work imposes.

In every field of reconstruction the first term of the new Parliament gave evidence of a willingness to deal vigorously and radically with the problems ahead, even in the many cases where a legacy of difficulties and embarrassments was inherited from the past. During the first six months there was relatively little to show for much of the work put in; but the Government has now armed itself with essential powers and has laid essential foundations for its work. The best verdict upon the activity of the first six months is that not for more than thirty years has the standing of the House of Commons in the eyes of the mass of the people been so high.

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<sup>1</sup> Speech of Parliamentary Secretary to Ministry of Works, House of Commons, 23 January, 1946.



**SUMMARY OF BILLS INTRODUCED BY THE LABOUR  
GOVERNMENT between 26th JULY, 1945 and FEBRUARY 15th, 1946**

<i>Title</i>	<i>Date of Intro- duction</i>	<i>Progress</i>
Supplies and Services (Transi- tional Powers) .. ..	20. 8.45	Royal Assent 20.12.45
British Settlements.. ..	23. 8.45	Royal Assent 10.12.45
Indian Divorce .. ..	23. 8.45	Royal Assent 31.10.45
Inshore Fishing Industry..	23. 8.45	Royal Assent 10.12.45
National Insurance (Indus- trial Injuries) .. ..	23. 8.45	Amended in Standing Committee 28.1.46
Bank of England .. ..	10.10.45	Royal Assent 14.2.46
Dock Workers (Regulation of Employment) .. ..	11.10.45	Royal Assent 14.2.46
Statutory Orders (Special Procedure) .. ..	11.10.45	Royal Assent 20.12.45
Police .. ..	18.10.45	Amended in Standing Committee 12.2.46
Consolidated Fund .. ..	19.10.45	Royal Assent 31.10.45
Expiring Laws Continuance	24.10.45	Royal Assent 10.12.45
Trunk Roads .. ..	26.10.45	Passed (House of Commons) 23.1.46
Building Restrictions (War- time Contraventions) ..	26.10.45	Passed (House of Commons) 18.12.45
Statutory Instruments ..	26.10.45	Passed (House of Commons) 18.12.45
National Service (Release of C.O.'s) .. ..	26.10.45	Passed (House of Commons) 22.1.46
Civil Defence (Suspension of Powers) .. ..	26.10.45	Royal Assent 10.12.45
Assurance Companies ..	29.10.45	Passed (House of Commons) 4.2.46
India (Proclamations of Emergency) .. ..	30.11.45	Royal Assent 14.2.46
Finance .. ..	31.10.45	Royal Assent 20.12.45
Furnished Houses (Rent Control) .. ..	1.11.45	Passed (House of Commons) 22.1.46
Emergency Laws (Transi- tional Provisions) .. ..	6.11.45	Royal Assent 14.2.46
Elections and Jurors ..	14.11.45	Royal Assent 20.12.45
Building Materials and Housing .. ..	14.11.45	Royal Assent 20.12.45
Local Government (Finan- cial Provisions) .. ..	15.11.45	Royal Assent 14.2.46
Local Government (Finan- cial Provisions) Scotland	15.11.45	Royal Assent 14.2.46
Bretton Woods Agreements	7.12.45	Royal Assent 20.12.45
Coal Industry Nationalisa- tion Bill .. ..	19.12.45	Second Reading, 30.1.46
Ministers of the Crown (Transfer of Functions)...	18.12.45	Amended in Committee 4.2.46
Education .. ..	18.12.45	Second Reading 1.2.46
Acquisition of Land (Auth- orisation Procedure) ..	14.12.45	Second Reading 31.1.46
National Insurance .. ..	24. 1.46	Second Reading 11. 2.46
Trade Disputes and Trade Unions .. ..	24. 1.46	Second Reading



<i>Title</i>	<i>Date of Intro- duction</i>	<i>Progress</i>
Investment (Control and Guarantees) .. ..	25. 1.46	Second Reading 5.2.46
Housing (Financial and Miscellaneous Provisions) ..	4. 2.46	First Reading
Housing (Financial Provisions) (Scotland) ..	4. 2.46	First Reading
Straits Settlements (Repeal)	13. 2.46	First Reading

## (2) OTHER BILLS.

(a) *Royal Assent.* Chartered and Other Bodies (Resumption of Elections); Coatbridge and Springburn Elections (Validation); Indian Franchise; Isle of Man (Customs); Local Elections (Service Abroad); Police (Overseas Service); Public Health (Scotland); War Damage (Valuation Appeals); Workmen's Compensation (Pneumoconiosis); Ministry of Health Provisional Order Confirmation (Doncaster); Ministry of Health Provisional Order Confirmation (Weston-super-Mare);

(b) *Others.* Water (Scotland) (Passed House of Commons); Agriculture (Artificial Insemination); Ministry of Health Provisional Order (Mortlake Crematorium Board); Miscellaneous Financial Provisions; India (Central Government and Legislature); Public Works Loans.

## PRINCIPAL WHITE PAPERS, PUBLISHED DURING THE SAME PERIOD

<i>Name</i>	<i>Date of Issue</i>	<i>Cmd. No.</i>	<i>Price</i>
Colonial Research, 2nd Annual Report of Committee .. ..	Aug. 45	6663	6d.
United Nations—Commentary on Charter of U.N. signed at San Francisco .. ..	Aug. 45	6666	1/3
War Criminals—Agreement for Prosecution and Punishment of .. ..	Aug. 45	6668	2d.
United Nations—Agreement establishing Preparatory Commission .. ..	Aug. 45	6669	1d.
Selling Price of Houses .. ..	Aug. 45	6670	6d.
Denmark—Monetary Agreement .. ..	Aug. 45	6671	1d.
Allied Ministers of Education—Conference on an Educational and Cultural Organisation for the United Nations .. ..	Aug. 45		2d.
Greater London Plan, 1944. Report by Prof. Abercrombie at request of Ministry of Town and Country Planning .. ..	Aug. 45		25/-
Import Trade and the Re-Export Trade of U.K., Accounts 1938 to 1944 inclusive .. ..	Aug. 45		2/-
Atomic Bomb, Statements relating to .. ..	Aug. 45		4d.
United Nations Today and Tomorrow .. ..	Aug. 45		6d.
Building and Civil Engineering Industries in Wartime .. ..	Aug. 45		3d.
Production in Building and Civil Engineering ..	Aug. 45		6d.
Elections, Select Committee on .. ..	Oct. 45		6d.
Supplementary Financial Statement. Changes in Taxation proposed by Chancellor of the Exchequer .. ..	Oct. 45		3d.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Date of Issue</i>	<i>Cmd. No.</i>	<i>Price</i>
West India Royal Commission—Statement of Action taken on the Recommendations ..	Oct. 45	6656	2/-
Ceylon—Commission on Constitutional Reform ..	Oct. 45	6677	2/6
Morocco—Final Act of the Conference at Paris in August, 1945 ..	Oct. 45	6678	2d.
Civil Service. The Scientific Civil Service ..	Sep. 45	6679	3d.
Civil Service. The Administrative Class ..	Sep. 45	6680	1d.
Netherlands—Monetary Agreement ..	Oct. 45	6681	1d.
U N R R A. Resolutions adopted by Council at its 3rd Session in August, 1945 ..	Oct. 45	6682	3d.
United States—Agreement on Petroleum ..	Oct. 45	6683	1d.
Temporary Housing Programme ..	Oct. 45	6686	2d.
Census of Production Committee : Report ..	Oct. 45	6687	6d.
Foreign Ministers, Establishment of Council of Atomic Energy. Account of the Development of using Atomic Energy for Military Purposes ..	Oct. 45	6689	1d.
Housing Management—Municipal Housing Estates ..	Oct. 45		2/6
Allied Plan for Education. Conference of Allied Ministers of Education ..	Oct. 45		6d.
Ceylon—Statement of Policy on Constitutional Reform ..	Nov. 45	6690	2d.
Czechoslovakia (Monetary Agreement) ..	Nov. 45	6694	9d.
War Criminals (Indictment) ..	Nov. 45	6696	9d.
Norway—Monetary Agreement ..	Nov. 45	6697	1d.
Staffing the Hospitals ..	Nov. 45		3d.
The Cotton Spinning Industry. Report on Wages and Methods ..	Nov. 45		9d.
Juvenile Employment Service—Cm. Report ..	Nov. 45		1/-
Statistical Material Presented During the Washington Negotiations ..	Dec. 45	6707	3d.
Financial Agreement between Governments of U S A and U K ..	Dec. 45	6708	2d.
Proposals for Consideration by an International Conference on Trade and Employment ..	Dec. 45	6709	4d.
Improvements in War Pensions ..	Dec. 45	6714	1d.
Port Transport Industry—Report by Committee of Investigation on Wages ..	Dec. 45		1d.
Provision of Employment in South Wales for Persons Suspended from Mining Industry on Account of Silicosis and Pneumoconiosis ..	Dec. 45	6719	1d.
Report of Committee on Agricultural Education in Scotland ..	1945	6704	9d.
British Air Services ..	D c. 45	6712	2d.
Post-war Code of Pay, Allowances and Service Pensions and Gratuities for Members of Forces below Officer Rank ..	Dec. 45	6715	6d.
Report of Catering Wages Commission on Recommendations for establishment of a Wages Board for Unlicensed Residential Establishments ..	Dec. 45	6706	2d.
The Gas Industry ..	Dec. 45	6699	2/-
Conversion of Existing Houses ..	Jan. 46		1/-
Malayan Union and Singapore ..	Jan. 46	6724	1d.

[Continued on page 17]



# WAGE POLICY

WHAT SHOULD IT BE ?

by Dispensator

(NOTE. *This is not a research article. It eschews the attractions of facts and figures in order to argue a case ; and, so as to argue it simply, it leaves out a good deal of detail. The author has been given complete freedom to state his own point of view in the hope that, by being provocative, he will incite Fabians to submit counter-arguments worthy of reproduction in the next issue of the Quarterly. Rightly or wrongly, the issue of a wage policy is now assuming great political importance, though among those who publicize it there is a mixture of motives and approaches. Hence it is perhaps fitting that the initial contribution to discussion in these pages should come from one who believes that the complications in policy-framing are over-rated.*—THE EDITOR.)

It has become the fashion to say that the country needs what is described as a " wage policy ", or that the Government ought to form one, or that various evils and misfortunes are arising for lack of it. This is a facile cry which has been taken up in a number of different circles, and repeated with that parrot-like insistence which to some ears lends a note of conviction.

What is a " wage policy " intended to be ? And what evil is it supposed to combat ? It need not be doubted that given full employment and the semi-inflationary circumstances which full employment is bound to imply, a new economic problem arises—how to persuade workers to enter and remain in essential but unattractive work. If it is assumed that restrictions on the right of the ordinary man to choose his job are intolerable in normal peacetime conditions—and the abandonment of this right is utterly incompatible with socialism, democracy or any civilised type of state—other means of inducing labour to move from one industry to another have to be found. There will always be some industries whose products are in increasing demand, and for which additional labour must be found. There will be others, for the moment less essential, in which less labour is needed. Old-fashioned *laissez-faire* conditions provide their own rough and ready solution. Unemployment and falling wages in the latter industries and rising wages in the former generally tend—with a great deal of delay, inefficiency, suffering and waste—to promote movement. At the other extreme, in conditions of efficient compulsion—which never have and never can exist—labour can in theory be forcibly moved. How can the problem be solved without incurring the disadvantages of these extreme approaches ? And how is it to be solved in conditions of full employment, where wage rates will virtually never fall, and where even limited compulsion will not be used ?

## HOW IT WAS DONE IN WAR

The question is fair. But the answer is easier than many who pose the problem imagine. The way to promote the required flow of labour into essential expanding industries in a period of full employment is to allow rates and earnings in these industries to rise, and keep rates in other industries stable. If that is a " wage policy " by all means let us have one ; but the practice of putting on

raincoats when it is wet, and taking them off when it is fine, has not usually in the past been dignified with the name of a "weather policy". The above method was in fact the one used in Great Britain during the war. It is a great mistake to suppose that any but a negligible proportion of the huge flow of labour transferred on to munition work was induced to move by compulsion alone. Far the most important single factors were the rise in wages and earnings and the improvement in working conditions encouraged by the Government in the munition trades. It is often forgotten that at the beginning of the war wages in most of the munition industries were low in comparison with wages elsewhere. In 1940 the standard women's rate in engineering for a 47-hour week was below 30/-. By 1943 it has been nearly doubled. In drop forgings, ball bearings, brass foundries, and other types of work, rates were also relatively low. It was the rise in these rates, welcomed by the Government, and not the use of compulsion, which promoted the tremendous flow of labour—particularly female labour—into the war trades, and so made victory possible. Similarly, in agriculture, the war could not have been won if the farm-worker's wage had stayed at 30/- a week.

All this was done, it should be noted, without any substantial interference with the machinery of collective bargaining—in spite of a good deal of clamour at the time for a Government-imposed "wages policy". Compulsory arbitration was the only important restriction on wage-bargaining introduced during the war. The changes secured were the result of the working of the normal machinery; and all that the Government did was to give general guidance—as in the White Paper of 1941 on price and wage stabilisation—and to contrive, by such discreet and appropriate means as are always available to it, that increases in rates occurred in the industries where they were most needed. This is really not so difficult as appears to be imagined. There is a practically continuous pressure for higher rates in almost all trades unless deflationary conditions exist; and if the Government lets it be known that it would like to see a wage-increase in the essential industries which are short of labour, this fact will be taken into account by Trades Unions, Employers' Federations, Arbitration Tribunals and similar bodies, in making their claims and giving their awards. The minds of all those engaged in wage negotiations must be subject to influence by some general considerations, and general guidance will therefore largely influence the results of these negotiations. This is really the solution to the problem existing today in such industries as coal, cotton, iron foundries, brick-works, etc., where wages are uneconomically low.

## POLICY FOR THE FUTURE

The right "policy" for a Government in full employment conditions, if it is desired to call discreet improvisation a "policy", is accordingly this. It should make it clear that it wishes to see wage rates and earnings rise in essential industries which are short of labour; and that it does not consider there is the same justification in other industries. At the same time it should make clear its wish to see working conditions improve in particularly unattractive industries which are short of labour. This will very likely mean that in full employment conditions dirty jobs will be paid more highly than clean ones, and manual work more highly than clerical. But why not?

Some critics will lament lugubriously that this will produce inflation. If some wages go up, they will say, and none go down, the national income will steadily rise; and in the end all wages and prices will begin rising. There is no reason to suppose that this would happen. The present Government is committed to general financial planning and part of its job in this connection is to see that the total flow of incomes is kept at a right level which provides full employment without inflation; and there are all sorts of ways of influencing



the flow. There are, for instance, the weapons of taxation, subsidies and control of prices, imports, investment, National Insurance contributions, etc. In conditions of full employment under a Socialist Government, we should use the weapons of taxation and subsidy freely; and we should free ourselves entirely from the Slavish Victorian assumption that the price of a necessity (e.g., food, coal, housing or education) need bear any relation to the income of the producer. The Treasury or whatever Department is responsible for managing the national income would be failing in its job if it tried to hold down wages in essential industries to uneconomic levels in order to save itself the trouble of making the other necessary financial adjustments. Any wage or price policy which fails to give us coal, cotton and bricks must be wrong. The right one must be framed in such a way as to secure the necessities required, and any inflationary consequences countered by general financial and economic policy. There is no evidence that they cannot be; and even if there was, we ought to try.

# SOCIAL SERVICES ON HOUSING ESTATES

by Irene T. Barclay

The time should have come to stop debating rival planning schemes. A key plan, coordinating the ideas and needs of England, Wales and Scotland should be ready: details should have been worked out for the first stages: men and women as they discard their uniforms should settle down to their jobs at drawing-boards, concrete-mixers, brick kilns, foundries, saw mills and ploughed fields in the knowledge that if they work well they really can make a world where they and their children can lead a full and creative life. This happy picture is unreal. The war has ended and the plans are unready. There is no real agreement, even with a strong Labour Government in power, as to what the economy of this country should be, what level of exports is to be aimed at, how far we are to try to grow our own food, how far a policy of dispersal of industry and population should and can be enforced or encouraged, and how to bring it about. There is, therefore, no accepted philosophy of Community on which to base schemes for the provision of Social Services.

Social Services on Housing Estates should be all the social services, for housing estates should not be isolated from places of work, education and recreation, whether the estates are in large or small towns or in country districts. Modern planners recognise this, and also that provision of recreation space does not make up for the lack of open country. This very obvious conclusion—well expressed by the writers of the Barlow Report—was not brought home to the majority of people until the various evacuations of the war years revealed to city dwellers that other places than London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Birmingham and the like really existed and could be lived in and even in some cases enjoyed. The sum total of these experiences—of the fighting and civil services, schools, staffs of industrial and commercial undertakings, and people voluntarily leaving or forced to leave blitzed areas—is that many young people, and especially young married people with children, are ready to move from crowded areas to small towns with access to open country, *always provided* there is suitable work, good housing, and reasonable facilities for leisure. This is a very hopeful sign, and means a real opportunity to bring about sensible decentralisation: it also presents an important challenge, particularly with regard to the provision of social services, which are equally necessary for new towns, new estates on the outskirts of existing towns and in rebuilding bombed or slum clearance areas in large cities.

## PLANNING FOR SOCIAL SERVICES

How far has the challenge been accepted on paper, and what data of experience is there from the pre-war and war years? In the exhibitions and published schemes by celebrated national planners there is an almost startling emphasis on social services: the first paragraphs of the accompanying letter-press read like sociological treatises, pointing to the importance of catering for the whole man, body, mind and spirit. Not only is provision made for fine schools with ample playgrounds: the Public Houses too demand their acre or two apiece of space: buildings labelled 'Children's Theatre', and spaces set aside for old people's gardens appear: in every Neighbourhood Unit—for this Americanism is generally adopted—there is a magnificent Community Centre. The schemes will not materialise in their present form,



and the Centres and Children's Theatres will not be built for many years yet: already the urge to build houses at all costs is modifying or spoiling excellent plans. This is disappointing, but the appalling mistakes of the inter-war years will not be repeated, because the idea of community planning has begun to capture popular imagination, and no government or local authority can afford to flout it. Vast estates providing houses for industrial workers, but with no provision for social services other than those supplied from outside the estate by the commercial cinema and dance hall or by religious denominations, have been discredited for all time. Space will be allowed on the new estates for community buildings, and a great effort will be made to start work on them. There is every reason to suppose that British Restaurants or popular municipal restaurants on similar lines will survive as a recognised social service. Special attention will be paid to certain age groups in the population: there will be provision for housing and club rooms for old people because they will be a large percentage of the population; for Infant Welfare Centres and Nursery Schools because infant life is now counted as valuable and the care of children of pre-school age important; for Youth Clubs because juvenile delinquency is a menace, and for the less cynical reason that the work for adolescents which has at last gained official recognition and encouragement has proved its worth, and will not be dropped. The new Public Health Act will in time mean new clinics, treatment centres, and hospital services. More health centres on the lines of the Pioneer Centre at Peckham are certain to be built by public and private subscription.

## RESEARCH INTO COMMUNITY NEEDS

There is room for much more research into community needs, for collecting a mass of personal testimony as well as pamphlets and articles and printed speeches, club magazines, reports and balance sheets—all the published data which throws light on experience. The work of small clubs and discussion groups is as important by way of evidence as the spectacular achievements of well established centres with four-figure memberships; failures and the reason for failures are as important as successes. But some of the work has been done,<sup>1</sup> and very useful and practical help can be given to local authorities and community associations. So much is popular attention focused on the Civic Centre with its new community building—and many war memorials may take the form of community centres—that it may be well to consider social services from this focal point. It is generally envisaged that the Centre will serve the needs of a population of from 8,000 to 15,000, that it will be non-sectarian and non-political, and that its function shall be recreational but not mainly frivolous: it should facilitate adult education, dramatic and musical societies, reading and debating, swimming and gymnastics, crafts and cookery, as well as fostering neighbourliness with a good canteen—preferably licensed—and providing plenty of opportunity for dancing. This conception, grand as it is, and practical too—for highly successful centres on these general lines exist—still leaves a great number of vital problems unresolved. To begin with, there is Education. A Socialist country is presumably going to carry out plans for educating its citizens either whole time in schools and universities, or in specialised and technical schools full time, or part time during working hours up to the age of eighteen. A great deal of educational work now undertaken by the best Youth groups should be unnecessary. We do not yet know what military training is to be demanded of young men and women, and whether this country is going to tolerate peace time conscription. At present

<sup>1</sup> Particularly by the *National Council for Social Service*, whose evidence was extensively used by the Ministry of Education in their pamphlet, "Community Centres"; also see *Nuffield College Social Survey* publications.

the call up at eighteen puts a powerful brake on all constructive work for adolescents: there is a general atmosphere of rather morbid slackness, a feeling that nothing is worth while if you have to 'go' at eighteen. Over eighteens who are left at home resent, as do under-fourteens, that public grants are not available to assist their clubs and pay for instructors and equipment, that interest and money seem to be concentrated on the fourteen to eighteen age group. What is to be the status of the school age children, who cannot afford the subscriptions paid by wage earners? Should the Centre be a family affair, whether or not its basis is biological as it was in the case of the Peckham Experiment? If all age groups are to belong to the Community Centre, are the various children's and adult organisations to have their own rooms where their apparatus can be kept? This question leads directly back to the all-important question of finance. If a community centre is to provide facilities for education, culture and recreation for vast numbers of different groups of people, it will not only cost a million pounds to build, it will be enormously costly to run; and, even in a Utopia of high wages and full employment, it is unlikely that enough finance will be available from the membership to support activities for non-earning members, including old-age pensioners, who need the use of clubs very much. It is sometimes suggested that the Community Centre should help to pay its way by having a residential wing, run rather on the lines of a residential settlement of the up-to-date type, or that such organisations as Children's Care Committees and the C.A.B. should be housed in the building. Whatever may be said for and against these ideas on their own merits—and the inclusion of the C.A.B. seems a good idea—they are not likely to solve the problem of finance. Complete responsibility by the local authorities will probably prove to be the way out, and provided that the spirit of voluntary enterprise can be preserved, the right way.

## FUNCTION OF COMMUNITY CENTRES

The conclusion is that the Community Centre will not appear rich, dazzling and complete, like an Aladdin's palace, and that it would not be a success if it did. The first essential of a Community Centre is a community, and then a Community Association, which co-ordinates the social services already existing in a town or on an estate, and gains experience in forming and running new activities where they are needed. It is desirable that the Centre should go up in sections, expanding according to a general plan, and that when the building is achieved it should not supersede the activities of the district, but, with its far finer resources, supplement them. It will provide rooms of different sizes which can be hired by a Townswomen's Guild, or Trades Council or a debating society, and the theatre will be used by, and be a stimulus to, all the drama groups in the district. Church and other institutional clubs will not lose their identity. If the community centre is in a village, it will obviously supply a meeting place for all purposes: if it serves a population, say, 10,000, it should not be the only meeting place for community purposes. Every estate of from 100 to 200 families needs a meeting room—somewhere where a garden committee or a knitting party can foregather, a pleasant room with a kitchen and cloakroom attached, which can be hired for private parties. No Aladdin's palace a mile away will replace such a room, or its value for democracy: it is in this room, and in organising the activities of the small housing estate that experience will be gained for the larger community.

Skilled and trained leadership will play a very important part in the social services of the future, and public money spent on club wardens and qualified teachers for adults will be well spent: the demand for such help will come from the members—a keen drama group will want a good producer, boys



and girls at work want the services of a librarian, and thoroughly enjoy lectures by a scientist with a gift for making his subject interesting. The services will come, and should come, not in a prescribed form, but as the demand arises and is stimulated by enterprising members. They will depend on the sort of society that evolves in the next twenty years. If that society has to depend for its livelihood on repetitive work making no demand on thought or skill, and supplied with cheap mass-produced goods, nothing very good in the way of social services will result despite all the enlightened efforts that can be made to improve leisure. If the people have enough vitality to make at least part of their work and daily lives creative, their social services will be experimental, varied and satisfying.

## YOUTH'S OPPORTUNITY?

The Ministry of Education has issued three pamphlets dealing with developments to be expected under the Education Act, 1944. *The Nation's Schools, Their Plan and Purpose*, describes in more detail than was possible in the Act itself how the various stages in education are to be extended and amplified. It paints a picture of what will be the result of the full implementation of the Act although, as the preface points out, "there are no neat solutions of universal application to the problem that will arise. . . . Local initiative and experiment will be more than ever necessary if the Act is to fructify fully in all the different parts with their varying conditions of England and Wales."

One might have expected the second pamphlet, *A Guide to the Educational System of England and Wales*, to be issued first. It replaces the pamphlet issued in 1934 called *Outline of the Structure of the Educational System in England and Wales*, and combines an account of the changes which will be brought about by the new Act with an explanation of those parts of the existing system which will remain. It will be welcomed by all who try to explain to the interested foreigner what passes in this country for an educational system but which seems to him to be a jungle of schools, 'Voluntary' and 'County', 'wholly' or 'partially' maintained by public funds, 'managed' or 'governed', free or fee paying. When he has read and thoroughly mastered these two pamphlets he should have at least a theoretical understanding of our educational system, although he will certainly not have a picture of what it is actually like. This series of pamphlets was prepared before the change of government, which perhaps accounts for the somewhat complacent attitude towards the immense problems which have to be tackled. The new Minister of Health struck a refreshing note in the preface to his Ministry's Annual Report this year. Instead of merely recounting with pride what had been achieved in the year under review, he gave examples to show how much still remained to be done. We may be sure that Miss Wilkinson will take the first opportunity of issuing a similar challenge in the field of education; an indication of 'so little done, so much to do' would be a welcome change in the traditional attitude of the Ministry.

The third pamphlet, *Youth's Opportunity*, deals with the County Colleges at which attendance for one full day or two half days a week is to be compulsory after 1950 for young people between leaving school and the age of eighteen. Although this proposal is in many ways an improvement on the ill-fated Day Continuation scheme of the Fisher Act of 1918, it only provides for the same number of hours of attendance. During the last quarter of a century the view that young people during adolescence should be regarded as wards of the Education Authority lent by them to industry, if not generally accepted, has influenced both industrialists and educationists, and a proposal for half time attendance at school for the first year would have shown some advance on the part of our legislators. Any account of the proposal to turn the mass of young people out into full time employment at the age of fifteen instead of sixteen, with only one day a week at a county college, should surely have been issued under the title of "Why Youth is still denied its Opportunity" and the tone of the pamphlet should have been apologetic, not smugly complacent. This attitude is all the more deplorable since, as the first few pages show, the writers assess the needs of the adolescent with sympathy and knowledge. These needs are summed up as (1) social experience, (2) participation in community life and (3) satisfactory relationship with adult members of



the community. 'They (the young people) should realise that they are attending college for a well defined purpose.'

The rest of the pamphlet explains how these needs can be met in eight hours a week for 44 weeks in the year. There is no suggestion that the time available is inadequate for more than a mere *approach* towards meeting these needs; nor is it suggested that since all but eight hours will be spent in industry, industry should adapt itself to the adolescent in order to help to meet these needs. No, eight hours a week compulsory attendance, with the opportunity of pursuing both educational and recreational activities at the college in the evenings, is, in the opinion of the authors, a wonderful opportunity for the boy and girl of fifteen. So carried away are they by their theme ('the whole of Further Education is one field') that in expressing the hope that part-time release may extend beyond 18 in the future, they say 'a scheme on the lines outlined in the next section should, with proper housing and staffing, give not only dignity and status to compulsory part-time education, but cohesion and vitality to the whole system of further education'. What follows is an educationist's dream—new spacious buildings, with libraries, playing fields, swimming baths, and opportunities for introducing students to climbing, hiking, sailing, rockclimbing, and cross country expeditions—although in a realistic moment the authors admit that only the preliminary training and knowledge for these pursuits can be given in the county colleges.

Such is the dream—what is the reality in this year of grace 1946? pre-fabricated huts for the fifteens to sixteens; classes of 50 or over for the younger pupils; insufficient Emergency Colleges. We cannot help thinking that if the Ministry would adopt the principle of 'Deeds not Words' for the next few years, the cause of education would be better served in the end; and a realistic pamphlet on the new 'Modern' Secondary School and its problems would have been more immediately helpful to a harassed profession.

The suggestions on the curriculum are interesting, but again too much seems to be expected from eight hours attendance for an average of two and a half years; and surely we have got beyond the Victorian phase of listing under 'The Special Needs of Girls' lessons in hygiene, sex, planning of a home, care of children and personal appearance? Are not young men just as concerned as girls to learn how to get on with the other sex, and do they need no help with their clothes and behaviour? If the population is not to decline, boys as well as girls must be made to understand the position, and learn that home making should be a joint affair. Future fathers need instruction as well as future mothers, although their spheres of responsibility in the family may differ.

Finally, why should the adjective 'unintellectual' be confined to girls? Surely, it is a quality that knows no distinction of sex. It is high time that we had a woman as Minister of Education.

SHERA D. SIMON and HAROLD C. SHEARMAN.

[Continued from page 8]		Date of Issue	Cmd. No.	Price
Paris Conference on Reparations : Final Act ..		Jan. 46	6721	3d.
A Report on the Training of Teachers (Scotland) ..		Jan. 46	6728	1/3
Documents relating to the First Session of the Food and Agriculture Conference of the United Nations		Jan. 46	6731	1/-
Agreement for the Establishment of the European Coal Organisation .. .. .		Jan. 46	6732	2d.
Final Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Dentistry .. .. .		Feb. 46	6727	1/-
Training for the Catering Industry .. ..		Feb. 46		3d.
Impact of the War on Civilian Consumption in the U.K., U.S.A. and Canada .. .. .		1945		2/6

# IN AND AROUND NUMBER ELEVEN

## A Quarterly Report on Fabian Activities

### LOCAL SOCIETIES AND SOCIALIST PROPAGANDA COMMITTEE

**EXPANSION.** We are very glad to announce that the number of Local Societies has now topped one hundred. When it was thought that the General Election would take place in October we hoped to have 100 Societies in existence. In fact, the work of forming Local Societies was suspended for nearly two months—in June and July. Taking this factor into consideration we have not fallen far short of our target, which was reached in December. Evidence is forthcoming from many quarters that Local Fabian Societies have a special and important contribution to make in close association with the Divisional Labour Parties, and new Societies are being developed in all parts of the United Kingdom.

**MESSAGE FROM MICHAEL YOUNG.** All members of Local Societies have been urged to co-operate in making the Labour Party's new Education Scheme a success. Several of our Local Societies have undertaken to provide Discussion Group leaders, and we re-print here a message about the scheme from Michael Young, the Research Secretary of the Labour Party, which recently appeared in the Directive of the Local Societies Committee:—

The National Executive Committee of the Labour Party has decided to launch a real live educational campaign. The Research Department is preparing pamphlets—under the title of Labour Discussion Series—on the policies and problems of the Labour Government. The first—"The Rise of the Labour Party" (price 2d.) together with a 18s. pamphlet "Do's and Don'ts for a Labour Discussion Group."

The idea is that every Ward Committee or local Labour Party should set up a Labour Discussion Group to discuss the subjects of these pamphlets, or any other subject that is preferred. The Groups will, it is hoped, be run on lines similar to those developed by ABCA and in Civil Defence. Discussion Groups will be encouraged, wherever competent people are available, to do practical work such as conducting surveys of local housing or education with a view to presenting a report to the Council Group, or writing an account of the history of the working class movement in the locality.

On paper these plans, experimental as they are, may look promising. But whether or not anything comes of it all will depend on the people who take the leading part in the work; and in particular on the Discussion Group Secretaries who should be appointed by local Parties and Wards. This is where the members of the local Fabian Societies can be of such immense value if they will give some of their time to the promotion of this educational programme. May we appeal to local Fabian Societies to give their earnest consideration to ways of pushing the scheme.

It should certainly show results in the next vital stage of the political development of the Labour Party.

**REGIONAL FABIAN COMMITTEES.** It is pleasing to note an increase in the number of Regional and Area Fabian Committees. A Regional Committee of the Fabian Society is co-terminous with the regional organisations of the Labour Party and is composed of delegates from Local Societies



within its area. Where it is not possible to form a complete Regional Committee, representatives from a smaller number of Societies form a Fabian Area Committee. The work of these Regional Committees has recently been reviewed by the Local Societies Committee, which has prepared a document for their guidance. The aims of these organisations are as follows:—

- (a) In close contact with the Local Societies Committee to further the formation of new Fabian Societies in the Region.
- (b) Active assistance to new Societies.
- (c) Organisation of Weekend Schools, Delegate Conferences and other activities.
- (d) Compilation of a Speakers' Panel on General and Special Subjects for Societies and other organisations.
- (e) Exchange of information about the activities and methods of Societies in the Region.
- (f) Initiation of research and correlation of results.
- (g) Arrangement of Tours for Special Speakers.
- (h) Discussion of problems with which the Fabian Delegate will have to deal on the Regional Council of the Labour Party.
- (i) Consideration of any propaganda activity not already covered by other organisations in the Region.
- (j) Organisation of special functions to raise funds for Regional Activities.
- (k) Arrangements for visits and inter-debates between Societies.

The Yorkshire Regional Committee has been in existence for several years and the Northern and Welsh Committees are becoming more firmly established. A Committee is being created for the West Midlands. Area Committees are already existing in the West of England and Hampshire and Dorset.

**SPECIAL CONFERENCES.** In view of the new responsibilities and opportunities afforded by a Labour majority Government it has become desirable to re-examine the work which Local Societies can perform. Two Special Conferences on this subject have been arranged; one for Southern England, to be held at Surrey Crest on March 23rd–24th, and the other at Tong Hall in Yorkshire on May 11th–12th. The Conferences are being divided into four parts: (1) The new political situation; (2) Modern Methods of Propaganda; (3) Discussion of a specially written document on the functions of Local Societies in relation to the new circumstances; and (4) Making Local Societies themselves more efficient. All national members of the Fabian Society, as well as members of Local Societies, will be welcomed at both Conferences.

**FABIAN PUBLICATIONS.** An interesting development by Local Societies is the production of Monthly Periodicals.

*The Watford Society* produce an excellent Newsletter, which is circulated to members and contains information on a variety of subjects. A recent issue reported on the Watford Civic Survey (inspired by the Local Society), a Film Unit, Playreading Circle and the Library, also organised by the Society.

*The Croydon Society* issues a Directive, which contains details of the Local Society's activities. A recent issue printed a special report from the Labour Party agent on the Municipal Elections.

*Wolverhampton* issues a monthly circular.

The '*Bath Fabian*' makes reference to plans for Research, undertaken at the request of the Labour Party, on the subject of the Bath Plan and also on educational facilities in Bath.

**RECENT ACTIVITIES.** Apart from locally planned activities, Local Societies have been (1) Co-operating in the Housing Survey being undertaken by the Home Research Department; (2) Arranging, in conjunction with the Colonial Bureau, for a series of Conferences in the principal regions, under the title of 'Labour and the Colonies'.

## HOME RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

**FOREIGN TRADE.** The Society has for long felt the need for open and careful discussion of the principles which should govern the policy of a Labour Government towards Britain's overseas trade. Recent events—the conclusion of the American Loan and the publication of the Anglo-American proposals for consideration at an international trade conference—have made that need even more imperative. Accordingly, a small group of economists has been convened to discuss these proposals and work out general principles of future policy.

**INDUSTRIAL INCENTIVES.** A donation has been received to cover part of the expenses of a large-scale piece of research into this subject. Donald G. MacRae has been engaged as a part-time researcher and has already commenced work on two distinct problems:

- (1) Incentives to workers, aimed at securing more co-operation with the management and greater productivity.
- (2) Incentives to entrepreneurs to produce and invest in sufficient quantities to fulfil an agreed economic plan.

**DISTRIBUTION.** The Group of Fabians who submitted written evidence to the Board of Trade Committee on the Census of Distribution subsequently gave oral evidence to the same Committee and at its request put in a supplementary statement on methods of presenting census information. The group, suitably enlarged, is now considering broader questions of future policy. Meanwhile a slightly amended version of the evidence is being put out as a pamphlet.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT.** The five standard Fabian Tracts on the powers, etc., of local authorities have been revised and will appear during the course of February and March.

**EDUCATION.** The Education Committee has recently prepared and submitted two memoranda to the Minister of Education—one on *Direct Grant Schools* and another on *Educational Policy and the Public Schools*. In this issue of the *Quarterly* there is a critical note by Shena D. Simon and Harold C. Shearman on the Ministry's pamphlet *Youth's Opportunity* which deals with the County Colleges. Helen Donington's pamphlet on the *Care of Homeless Children* has been published. A donor has made a grant of £50 for research into *Secondary Education*. The main activities of the Committee will be directed towards this research in the coming months and Mrs. Eileen Millar has agreed to undertake the work of investigation.

**FILMS.** As a result of recent meetings of the Films Group a memorandum entitled *Proposals for a Visual Education Programme* has been sent in to the Ministry of Education. The group is now proposing to make a quantitative analysis of the feature films shown in this country in order to discover how many films are needed per annum to fill available screen space.

**HOUSING.** In January a successful conference on Housing Problems was held in London. The Speakers were: Harold Wilson, M.P., Henry Braddock, A.R.I.B.A., Percy Good, Director British Standards Institution, Sir Ernest Simon and C. W. Gibson, M.P. An interesting feature of the conference was the large number of delegates from local housing authorities. There was a lively and comprehensive discussion. Discussions and research by the Housing Committee are going ahead. The second of a series of articles on important current problems appears in this number of the *Quarterly* and others have been planned for further issues.



## WOMEN'S GROUP

The Women's Group has held two very interesting Discussion Meetings. At the first Councillor Marion Billson spoke on *The Nationality and Domicile of Married Women* and at the second Miss Elizabeth Denby spoke on *New Housing Standards*.

## THE COLONIAL BUREAU

**PAMPHLET ON PALESTINE.** The Bureau produced a pamphlet entitled *Palestine Controversy: A Symposium*, which appeared simultaneously with Mr. Bevin's important statement on the future of Palestine. There was an introduction by H. N. Brailsford and all points of view were put in the symposium—the Zionist case by Dr James Parkes, the Arab case by Sir Edward Spears, a British point of view by Captain D. Hopkinson, and the case for Jewish and Arab co-operation by Professor J. L. Magnes.

**DEBATE ON PALESTINE.** The publication of this pamphlet was followed by a well-attended and successful debate on Palestine in December. The Jewish case was argued by Mr David Horowitz, head of the Economic Department of the Jewish Agency in Palestine, and the Arab case by Mr Edward Atiyah of the Arab Office in London.

**STRATEGIC COLONIES.** A pamphlet *Strategic Colonies and their Future* has been published, dealing with the future of Hong Kong, Cyprus, Malta and Gibraltar. There is an introduction by Mr A. Creech Jones, discussing the general problems raised by strategic colonies in the new international order.

**EAST AFRICA.** Two papers on the future of East Africa have been issued under the authority of the Labour Government. While the policy outlined received the general support of the Bureau, it was felt that certain reassurances were needed regarding the plans for the settlement of a further 500 European farmers in Kenya. A letter on this question was addressed to the Colonial Office, which received a deputation from the Bureau to discuss the points raised. The deputation was led by Frank Horrabin and consisted of F. Skinnard, M P, Mr C. W. Greenidge, Dr Arthur Lewis and Dr Rita Hinden.

**MEETING ON EAST AFRICA.** A successful meeting was held on Labour's policy in East Africa. An address was given by Mr Creech Jones, who expounded the new policy in detail. Mr Creech Jones's speech has been duplicated and is available on request.

**MEETING IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.** In conjunction with the Parliamentary Labour Party, a tea party was held in the Houses of Parliament in December to introduce members of the Bureau's Committee to Members of Parliament interested in colonial affairs. Both the Secretary of State and the Under-Secretary attended and addressed the meeting, stressing the vital importance of Parliamentary attention being given to colonial questions. Dr Hinden gave a short account of the Bureau's work.

**SOUTHERN RHODESIA.** A new Bill is being brought before the Southern Rhodesian Parliament which re-enacts and expands in urban areas the humiliating colour discrimination pass laws, curfew regulations, registration provisions, etc., against the introduction of which into Southern African countries the Labour movement has protested for a generation. The Bureau has addressed a strong memorandum to the Dominions Office, and the matter is being raised in Parliament.

**SUDAN: THE ROAD AHEAD.** A pamphlet under this name has been published, and has received considerable attention in the Sudan. Many thousands of copies have been ordered and the pamphlet has been translated

into Arabic and also serialised in local British and Arabic papers. The pamphlet was particularly opportune as the question of the future status of the Sudan is being raised again in the Egyptian demands for a revision of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936.

## INDIAN AFFAIRS GROUP

This new section of the Society was started in November and has already embarked on a definite programme of research. Drafts of six pamphlets are all nearing completion. Their subjects and authors are: *Sterling Balances* (T. Gilpin), *Indian Political Parties* (Margaret Pope), *The Future British Agreement with India* (Penderel Moon), *Pakistan* (Dr Spate), *Facts and Figures about India* (Col Robert Armstrong), and *The Future of the Indian States* (Freda Martin). The Honorary Secretary is Woodrow Wyatt, M.P. During his absence in India with the Parliamentary Delegation Mrs Freda Martin has been acting as secretary. Arrangements are going forward for a residential conference to be held in March.

## INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

**EUROPEAN INLAND TRANSPORT.** A research pamphlet on this subject has just gone to press. As Leonard Woolf says in a Foreword, there is no real solution to the problem so long as the worship of the national state and its sovereignty prevents the internationalisation of European transport. The pamphlet shows the disastrous results which economic nationalism, by insisting jealously upon national transport systems, has and must have on the European economy.

**THE DANUBE VALLEY.** As a result of discussions initiated some nine months ago, a plan for a Danube Valley Authority is now in MS. It is a practical scheme for a part of Europe which in the past has gone from one political and economic tragedy to another. Every effort is being made to get influential support for it in this country.

**SPAIN.** Following the Bureau's pamphlet on Spain, which is now being translated into German, a public meeting has been held, with Harold Laski, Ilsa Barea and George Brown, M.P., as speakers. A memorandum entitled *British Labour Policy and Franco Spain* has been circulated to members of the External Affairs Committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party and to others interested.

**THE FAR EAST.** In February a residential conference on the Far East was held at Oulton Hall, Clacton, at which the speakers were J. S. Furnivall, Leonard Matters, E. R. Hughes, Ray Bonwit and Dorothy Woodman. The conference papers and discussion provide a good basis for future work; four of the papers appear in the February issue of *Left News*.

**ATOMIC ENERGY AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY.** The series of six lectures on this subject held at the Conway Hall in conjunction with the N C L C and the Central London Fabian Society, is meeting with great success. There have been a number of delegates from over 100 Trade Union branches and local Labour Parties. The speakers are Prof. J. D. Bernal, Ritchie Calder, Ian Mikardo, M.P., Sir Arthur Salter, M.P., and W. Arnold Forster.

**GENERAL.** The Bureau has been continuing as a meeting place for socialists from other countries. Small gatherings have been held for Leon Blum, Jouhaux, socialist delegates to the U N E S C O and some of the socialist delegates to the recent World Youth Congress. The responsibility for many such international discussions will now tend naturally and properly to fall on the Labour Party's International Department, which is resuming its activities, and this will allow the Bureau to concentrate more on research.



# BOOK REVIEWS

(Books received from Publishers only)

## **PROSPECTS OF THE INDUSTRIAL AREAS OF GREAT BRITAIN** By M. P. Fogarty (Methuen 32/-)

The first of the reports of the Nuffield College Social Reconstruction Survey, started in 1941. Carried out by a large army of voluntary investigators in each region, it contains a great deal of information forming a general picture of economic possibilities in the main industrial areas. How far the information collected is up-to-date is doubtful and the author draws attention to the lack of statistical information available and to the difficulties of comparison between the figures collected by different departments. Some of these difficulties should disappear now that secrecy is not needed for security reasons.

One of the main conclusions drawn by the author from these reports is the necessity for local and regional plans within a comprehensive national economic plan. This applies to prosperous areas as much as to pre-war depressed areas. In both there was a serious lack of industrial balance, making them vulnerable to changes in demand. Unless steps are taken to prevent it, most of the depressed areas will return to their pre-war conditions once the post-war reconstruction boom is over. Trading Estates and other measures had made some improvement, but were insufficient to deal with the real problem. One of the main difficulties in planning the location of industry at present is the fear of cyclical depression. A policy of general full employment is, therefore, the first necessity for regional planning.

This is an invaluable report for those interested in our future industrial structure. What seems to be needed now as a basis for planning are estimates of demand for different classes of goods during a stable period of full employment.

H. A.

## **ELECTRICITY: PUBLIC OR PRIVATE MONOPOLY** By F. Hamlyn Dennis (Gollancz 7/6)

A well documented plea for the socialisation of the electricity supply industry. Contains a mass of information, charts, statistics and quotations from reports, articles and speeches, illustrating the history, present organisation and economics of the industry. Although making a powerful case for increased electricity consumption, leading to lower costs, and for public control of the industry within the framework of a National Fuel Plan, it contains no new suggestions or detailed scheme. A useful reference book if it had an index.

A. A.

## **YEAR BOOK OF LABOUR STATISTICS 1943-4** (ILO 8/-)

This survey of labour conditions in over 60 countries follows the lines of pre-war year books. The tables cover, among other things, employment and unemployment, hours of work, wages, cost of living, migration and industrial accidents. There are interesting new tables on industrial disputes. Despite the inevitable gaps in the series for the war years in many countries, this is a most valuable volume.

G. D. N. W.

## **A HANDBOOK OF THE PLYMOUTH PLAN** (Nisbet 5/-)

This attractive production is intended for school children and others who may wish to know something of the City Plan. Readers are reminded that, as early as the beginning of the 19th century, an attempt was made by a group of notable citizens, among whom was the distinguished architect Foulston, to develop the city on a deliberate plan; but the promise was only partly fulfilled. Out of the agony of destruction during the war, a resolve once again was born to rebuild a city finer than before and adapted to the needs of all citizens alike. The illustrations together with the text give an inspiring picture of the extent and splendour of the Plan.

B. D.

**REVIEW OF "THE REILLY PLAN"** By Lawrence Wolfe (Nicholson and Watson 6/-)

Professor Reilly set out to plan a part of Liverpool, according to his idea of sound and pleasing architectural development. His plan was more than just houses, it was light, air, trees and open spaces. Lawrence Wolfe set out to prove that this is good sociology and economics. It is well done, but a chapter or two might have been devoted to relative costs in money and personnel. Without precise statistics the case lacks strength in presentation.

E. J. G.

**COUNTRY PLANNING** By The Agricultural Economics Research Institute (Oxford University Press 7/6)

Designated a Study of Rural Problems, this well-indexed and illustrated book is a basic sociological and economic survey of a Midland rural area. A detailed picture of country life for the general reader, it may be useful to the professional planner as a guide to similar surveys in other places and to some future generation it should have great value as an authentic study of life in a particular area of England at a precise period of time.

E. P.

**PHYSICAL PLANNING** Edited by R. M. McCallum (Architectural Press 21/-)

The writers, each an expert in his own field, describe with force, clarity and conviction exactly how much has been done, and how much remains to do, in the battle against slums, overcrowding, squalor, ugliness and waste, and towards a more enlightened use of the national resources of the land. Nor are they concerned with physical needs only, but also to recover the artistry of a less material age. Some kinds of planning, as one writer points out, may restrict liberty, but others greatly expand it by enabling people to choose and enjoy much that would otherwise be closed to them. Opposition to planning has, indeed, been inspired less by desire for personal freedom than by a fear, conscious or unconscious, that planning will lead to a sharing of wealth and privilege among wider groups of citizens. The book is a notable contribution to the work of post-war reconstruction.

B. D.

**THE COMMUNITY AND THE SCHOOL** By Bernard Cousin (Jefferson 4/6)

A plea for the establishment of voluntary regional committees with representatives of Teachers and L.E.A.'s; Councillors, Industry and Business; the Clergy, Parents' Associations, Adult Education and cultural associations, their object to be education for democracy through direct contacts and experience.

C.S.M. (Community and Schools Movement) would make civics and the economic and cultural life of the community a reality, and would break down the artificial division between the classroom and the outside world and the isolation of the teacher. It would cost nothing and should stimulate teachers, children and citizens, and foster community spirit. A very sensible suggestion in the English tradition of voluntary movements.

D. A.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ENGLAND AND WALES** By Eric W. Jackson (Pelican Books 9d)

This will serve as an admirable guide to both the layman and councillor—who have found difficulty in obtaining a kaleidoscopic grip of the field of local government. The author defines the various types of authorities, then goes on to describe how they carry out those functions, and finally denotes the modern trends of local government. The author has disentangled successfully the maze that confronts the student of this field and has combined an obvious background of practical experience with a good theoretical grasp of his subject. If you are lucky enough to get hold of a copy—buy one.

R. D.

**THE POPULATION OF GREAT BRITAIN** By Mark Abrams (Allen and Unwin 3/6)

This is the first of a series of Research Studies by the London Press Exchange, who are to be congratulated on such an excellent first choice. The book covers in very lucid style the pre-war situation, the war period, the consequences therefrom and estimates for the future. Such a wide field is dealt with in a very pungent form and to both layman and expert should provide useful fresh data and ideas.

R. D.

**THE BABY FAMINE** By Geoffrey Pardoe (Torchstream Books 2/6)

The writer does not pretend to be a Royal Commission but, as father of a family, he presents his personal report on the causes and remedies of births and deficiency in Britain. The governing factors, he concludes, are food and birth control. He is sceptical as to any effect of propaganda in influencing the size of the family, and relies rather on radical social and economic changes. Among these he gives priority to improved housing, adequate children's allowances, social security, educational and vocational opportunity. He is here on well-trodden ground, but is prepared to explore new paths. All women, he believes, want the adventure of childbirth, but some prefer to, or must perforce, remain single. Illegitimacy is already respectable: it should now be made legal. The unmarried mother should have a right to the courtesy title of Mrs and her child to inherit his father's name and property. Polygamy, should be permissible. To some women it may be suited, and to the Church it need offer no difficulties. There are plenty of precedents in the Bible. Divorce should be open to anyone, and childless or ill-assorted couples enabled to make a fresh start. The writer is sure of his case, but under no illusions as to its reception by any political party. His report, he sadly foresees, is doomed to lie on the table.

B. D.

**ECONOMIC PROGRESS AND SOCIAL SECURITY** By Allan G. B. Fisher (Macmillan 18/-)

Professor Fisher's central thesis is that since economic progress depends on people's changing their jobs and investments, social security arrangements which enable them to shirk these painful adjustments endanger standards of living. The book is thoughtful and comprehensive, but not at all constructive. The danger indicated is a real one, and the problem is *how* to achieve social security without reducing mobility: little is proposed. It is a pity that the book is so long-winded and discursive. A competent and selective précis, written in simpler English, would be well worth reading.

P. C.

**THE JEWS IN WORK AND TRADE: A WORLD SURVEY** By N. Barou (Trades Advisory Council 1/6)

The survey sets out the essential facts and population trends of Jewish geographical and occupational distribution and makes a useful contribution to a better knowledge and understanding of the Jewish problem. During the war, the writer tells us, more than one-quarter of the world's Jewish population have been murdered or starved to death in Europe. The survivors have suffered too much to wish to remain in or return to their native lands. Under Nazi domination, the peoples in occupied countries have been infected with anti-Semitic poison, and the danger greatly aggravated by the cunning device of handing over Jewish property, not to Germans, but to local inhabitants. In Poland, 80 per cent of Jewish property is said to be held by Poles. For the survivors of martyred Jewry in Europe the writer can see no other hope than free and unrestricted immigration into Palestine. He ignores the Arab claim that Palestine for more than a thousand years has been part of the Arab world. The difficulties will not be resolved except by mutual agreement. There is, meanwhile, an issue of humanity that cannot wait. Have we ourselves and our American allies done all that we can to stamp out the anti-Semitic virus and to open wide our doors to the victims of brutal racial persecution?

B. D.



**AN AFRICAN SURVEY** By Lord Hailey (Oxford University Press 35/-)

Lord Hailey's survey is a classic, and provides within its covers the most comprehensive source of information on problems arising in Africa south of the Sahara that is in existence. Unfortunately, the volume has for some time been unobtainable, and it is therefore particularly useful that this reprint should now make its appearance, even though it has not yet been possible to bring it up-to-date. Perhaps in the next few years we may see a second edition incorporating the new facts and the new administrative attitudes which have developed since the book first appeared.

B. A. H.

**STRANGERS SHOULD NOT WHISPER** By Jan-Albert Goris (L. B. Fischer \$2.75)

A distinguished Belgian explains war-time European problems to the American public with charm, urbanity and penetration. He describes what German occupation meant to his people, the detailed and methodical oppression and the courageous work of the resistance. If it is possible for the written word to dispel complacent optimism about German occupation methods and behaviour, this book should do so.

E. W. C.

**ASSIZE OF ARMS** Vol. I By Brigadier General J. H. Morgan (Methuen 15/-)

From a former Deputy Adjutant General and British Military Representative on the Inter-Allied Council in Germany from 1919 to 1923 one would expect a well-documented account of the disarmament of Germany and her rearmament, but when that account reads as engrossingly as a good novel one is eager to see the second volume promised in the near future. The present volume sets the scene, describes the characters and supplies the background of people, events and causes that led to the effects we all know and as a guide to an understanding of the German character, to an explanation of contemporary history and as a warning for the future this work merits the oft-repeated but seldom-deserved phrase: A book that should be read.

E. P.

**THE GOVERNING OF MEN** By Alexander H. Leighton (Sir Humphrey Milford 25/-)

A fascinating description of the setting up and administration of the relocation centre for Japanese evacuated to Boston from the west coast of the U.S.A. The problems of administrators and administered are analysed on principles of applied anthropology, thereby bringing into prominence fundamental difficulties frequently ignored by administrators. A book to interest all concerned with displaced communities.

E. W. C.

**LAW AND ORDERS** By C. K. Allen (Stevens 15/-)

Dr C. K. Allen has written what is a most valuable text book on delegated legislation and executive powers. In this branch of Law, there are many obscure and doubtful points, and one of the useful features of the book is Dr Allen's opinion on them.

This subject does not receive enough attention from socialists, who are apt to think that control of delegated legislation is a capitalist trick to slow down the movement towards socialism. It is true that in the past much of the opposition to the exercise of power by Government departments has come from property interests, but the war has shown to those under the Essential Work Orders, in cases before Hardship Committees and elsewhere, how important it is that the quasi-judicial powers vested in departments should be properly exercised and proper control established by Parliament over departmental legislation. Between August 1941 and June the Home Office 'forgot' to lay before Parliament 22 sets of regulations dealing with the N.F.S! Dr Allen's book should be bought for purposes of information; his right-wing opinions may be disregarded.

R. S. W. P.

**BUREAUCRACY** By Ludwig von Mises (William Hodge & Co. 8/6)

Two quotations illustrate that this book is inspired by the author's belief that only the profit motive impels people to be efficient and is informed by his experience of German officialdom. 'Bureaucratic management is management bound to comply with detailed rules and regulations fixed by the authority of a superior body' (p. 58). 'The management is under the necessity of abiding by a code of instructions; this alone matters' (p. 79). No civil servant above the rank of counter clerk in the post office will recognise in either an approximate description of his duties. The whole question of responsibility, of the right of the public to call to account the action of a civil servant, is ignored. The book contains no discussion of the real problems of efficient organisation of a civil service.

E. W. C.

**ELECTION AND REPRESENTATION** By James Hogan (Blackwell 15/-)

In this interesting study of the nature and conditions of representative government—the Prish experiment in proportional representation, theoretic and historical implications, current problems, such as occupational representation, national minorities, totalitarian voting—the writer concludes that there is no other choice today than the self-discipline of the democratic state or self-abandonment to totalitarian servitude. He is further convinced that, in order to become socially and economically classless, a society must begin by being politically classless. His conviction here seems more open to challenge. Economic dependence or illiteracy may be as great a barrier to democracy as class or group disenfranchisement or the one-party system. It is not without significance that women won the vote in this country after and not before the passing of the Married Woman's Property Act and the opening of higher education to women. 'How was it chosen?' 'Whose interests does it serve?' As a test of democratic government, both questions may be equally pertinent.

B. D.

**DEMOCRATIC REALISM** By A. C. Hill (Cape 7/6)

Hitler proved that a lot of people don't like democracy; Nuremberg is proving that a lot more do. This book gives one the impression that Mr Hill is prepared to accept democracy—since he is going to get it in any case—but that he likes it only on conditions. The writing of this treatise may have clarified the author's outlook on the matter, but one reviewer was more baffled when he came out than when he went in.

G. P.

**SOCIAL THINKING** By Hyman Levy (Cobbett Press 7/6)

Many of those who pay lip service to dialectical materialism have been deterred from making themselves familiar with the philosophy of their choice by the absence of adequate elementary texts. This is a gap which Prof. Levy now fills very admirably. Those who already accept the dialectical theory of social change, as well as that strange creature, the 'general reader', will find Prof. Levy's exposition remarkably clear, and the exercises in the application of the theory, which he provides, particularly useful.

B. A. H.

**COMMUNISM AND MAN** By F. J. Sheed (Sheed & Ward 6/-)

A well-written little book of which the first hundred pages, devoted to a description and criticism of Marxism, are lucid, sympathetic, and worth reading. The author then turns over to catholic propaganda of the simpler kind, and proceeds to beg the questions which he has previously been discussing. The latter part contains some blistering passages on capitalist morality drawn from Pius XI's Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* which readers may be interested to compare with the attitude of the Church as shown in its actions: even Mr Sheed seems conscious that there is some discrepancy.

M. I. C.



**THE HERO IN HISTORY** By S. Hook (Secker and Warburg 8/6)

An upper-middle-brow discussion of theories about the casual function of the individual in history. At its best in discussing Marxist determinism; at its worst—because it merely repeats what we know—in discussing democratic control of leaders. The division of 'great' men into 'eventful' and 'event-making' men is interesting; only Lenin qualifies for the latter category, apparently. Hook's symbol for the pattern of history—a tree—is also interesting. 'The tree of history has no "true" or "necessary" or "pre-determined" or "fixed" shape. Neither has it an infinite variety of branchings without law or pattern or mutual support and interrelation.' Marxists need not worry, however; socialism may not be inevitable, but an occasional great man and the hard work and vigilance of common men give us some assurance that we'll achieve it nevertheless.

D. M. S.

**ESSAYS ON GOVERNMENT** By Ernest Barker (OUP 15/-)

A collection of essays on such topics as British Constitutional Monarchy, Blackstone on the British Constitution, Burke on the French Revolution, written at various times for varied types of readers. The contributions are necessarily uneven in quality. The more specialised essays, which display the erudition of the author, are those most likely to interest Fabian readers.

E. W. C.

**INTERNATIONAL SEA TRANSPORT** By Brig.-Gen. Sir Osborne Mance, assisted by J. E. Wheeler (Oxford University Press 12/6)

This book is a comprehensive review of official and unofficial attempts to regulate shipping, nationally and internationally, between the wars. The increase in economic nationalism and the fear of war brought about government support of national mercantile marines in the form of subsidies, discrimination and the reservation of coastal trading. The results to world trade were by no means beneficial.

Great Britain's share of world shipping fell from over half in 1900 to little more than one-third in 1939. If, as appears to be the case, there is another decade of competition and economic nationalism, it is desirable for all concerned with the future of British industry to know the facts set forth in this book and to consider the author's suggestions for the future regulation of sea transport. International ownership and control of shipping is the ultimate solution, but with world politics in their present state it is of little value to advocate it now.

The book contains a useful summary of treaties affecting sea transport and it is distressing to note how many of the non-political type have not been ratified by Great Britain. Some machinery for automatically bringing all such treaties before Parliament is badly needed.

R. S. W. P.

**THE GEOGRAPHY OF WORLD AIR TRANSPORT** By J. Parker van Zandt (Washington D.C., The Brookings Institution \$1)

This is the first volume of a series, under the general title 'America Faces the Air Age', which the Brookings Institution proposes to issue, and it has been written by the series editor. It is an exemplar of how to present a technical problem in a form helpful to the expert and readily assimilable by the layman without descending to popular generalisations. The book crystallises much of the work which has been done by a number of people in the last two or three years to stop people thinking of aviation in terms of Mercator's Projection and other familiar, formal and highly deceptive cartographical forms. It also serves to dispel some of the fallacious thought which has been current about routes which look pretty on a map but which have no economic value, and particularly about trans-polar flying. Moreover, it makes clear how easily and seriously political considerations interfere with technical and economic soundness in the planning of air routes.



A possession of the United States (Alaska), a dependency of a British Crown Colony (Labrador), and Soviet Eastern Siberia, are perhaps the three most "strategic" territories, lying athwart the network of world airways. They all can be by-passed, however, if inept politics makes it necessary.

I commend this book unreservedly.

I. M.

**WORLD OF PLENTY** By Eric Knight and Paul Rotha (Nicholson and Watson 1/6)

The book of the film, excellently produced and cheap at the price. Some of it, e.g. the sections on Lend-Lease, makes slightly wry reading now; but the lesson is no less necessary than it was. Recommended.

M. I. C.

**CONDUCT OF LOCAL ELECTIONS** By Harold Croft (New Edition) (Labour Party 1/-)

This is an admirable guide for both elector, agent and candidate, complete with index. To be recommended to all who are interested in the working of our democratic institutions.

R. D.

**SCOPE AND METHOD IN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THEORY** By G. D. H. Cole (Clarendon Press 2/-)

In this inaugural address to Oxford University students, Mr. Cole has concentrated less on political than on social institutions and on the social theories from which they have sprung. He sees in his task a dual purpose to fulfil: First of all, to disentangle in these theories the foundation of values on which they rest; and, secondly, to suggest to those whom we may be able to influence what is the right pattern of social thought to guide social action here and now. The lecture makes a valuable contribution to clear thinking on fundamental social issues.

B. D.

